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Spring 2-1-1999

### LS 180.01: Introduction to Film

Lynn Purl

*University of Montana, Missoula*

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Autumn 1999

Lynn Purl

Liberal Studies 180, Introduction to Film

M 2:10-5:00, W 2:10-4:00

GBB 123

lynnp@selway.umn.edu

Office: LA151A (inside 151)

243-5314

Home: 728-4525

Office hours: M 1:00-2:00, Th 2:00-3:30, and by appointment

**Course description:** This course will serve as an introduction to basic concepts of film and film theory. The goal is to encourage you to become more sophisticated viewers and consumers of movies, with an ability to view films as art, as marketplace commodities, as technology, as historical documents, and as cultural and ideological forces. I also hope you will increase your ability to organize and articulate your insights, both in class discussions and in writing.

**Required text:** *Film Art: An Introduction*, fifth edition, by Bordwell and Thompson

**Course requirements:** Quizzes, final, term paper, and the preparation of questions for class discussion, as well as regular attendance and participation.

**Film screenings:** Films will generally be screened in class on Mondays, with one notable exception: Sometime **between Oct. 22-26 you must go to the New Crystal Theatre** (515 S. Higgins, just south of the Higgins Bridge, 728-5748) to watch the reissue of *The Third Man*. On Tuesday, Oct. 26, at the 7:00 pm show, I will be introducing the film and leading a Q&A with the audience afterwards. I encourage you to attend that showing, but any show is fine. Fridays and Tuesdays are bargain nights. The Crystal is a non-profit theatre and needs and deserves community support. As usual, you will write a discussion question, due in class Wed., Oct. 27. **Please attach your ticket stub.** Sorry, no video substitutes—I want you to experience the film on the big screen. **No class Monday, Oct. 25.**

**Quizzes:** In order to encourage you to stay on top of things, we will have occasional quizzes. I prefer to use our class time for in-depth discussion and analysis; therefore, I will trust you as adults to keep up with the reading, attend the film screenings, and to prepare questions to ask in class about material you'd like explained. Otherwise, we will mainly go over the information in the text only as it comes up in class discussion.

**The final** will cover all material from class sessions and film screenings, plus the readings. Quizzes and exams will be primarily short essay, with some multiple choice and short answer.

For the **papers**, I will give you a list of films for you to view outside class. (Many films are available to check out at IMS; others can be found at Crystal Video, Hastings, or other video stores.) You will be asked to write a critical analysis of the film following the models offered in the textbook. Your analysis should generally focus on one aspect (technical, cultural, historical, ideological, thematic, etc.) of the film. You may choose to do a comparison with a film we have seen in class. Papers on readings from the first half of the semester are **due Monday, Oct. 18**; those from the second half are **due Monday, Nov. 22**. Only one paper is required, and you may choose which to do; you may also do the other for **extra credit**. Papers will not be accepted after the due date. See separate handout for details.

**Discussion questions:** Each Wednesday you will prepare **one paragraph** discussing an issue you might like to see raised in class. This can be a legitimate question to which you do not know the answer, or something noteworthy you'd like to call to our attention. It can be on the reading, the film screening, or both. These **must be typed**, just like the papers. We will use these questions in class in various ways to generate discussion. I will collect these paragraphs regularly, though perhaps not every time.

There is no good way to study film without actually watching films, so **attendance** at all class sessions and film screenings is mandatory (yes, even if you've seen it before!). I'll allow 3 skips, no questions asked. After that, you will need a legitimate excuse, or your grade will be affected. Watching movies is more enjoyable when it's a collective experience anyway. In addition to being here, you need to keep up with the reading (beats desperate cramming) and **participate** in class discussions.

**Grading:** The final breakdown will be as follows:

Quizzes:	20% total
Discussion questions:	20% total
Final:	20%
Paper:	20%
Attendance:	10%
Participation:	10%

*Week 1:*

M 8/30 Introduction; *Hate (La Haine)*, 1995, Mathieu Kassovitz, France, 95 min.)

W 9/1 Discussion question due

*Week 2:*

M 9/6 Labor Day

W 9/8 Read Chap. 1. View shorts in class. Discussion question due

*Week 3:*

M 9/13 Chap. 2. *Lone Star* (1995, John Sayles, USA, 134 min.)

W 9/15 Discussion question due

*Week 4:*

M 9/20 Chap. 3. *The Wizard of Oz* (1939, Victor Fleming, USA, 101 min.)

W 9/22 Discussion question due

*Week 5:*

M 9/27 Chap. 4. *Citizen Kane* (1941, Orson Welles, USA, 119 min.)

W 9/29 Discussion question due

*Week 6:*

M 10/4 Chap. 6. *The Shining* (1980, Stanley Kubrick, UK, 146 min.)

W 10/6 Discussion question due

*Week 7:*

M 10/11 Chap. 7. *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957, David Lean, UK, 155 min.)

W 10/13 Discussion question due

*Week 8:*

M 10/18 **Papers due** (if you choose to do first paper; see above). Chap. 8. *The Birds* (1963, Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 120 min.)

W 10/20 Discussion question due

*Week 9:*

M 10/25 **No class.** Instead go to Crystal Theatre sometime between 10/22-10/26 to see *The Third Man* (1949, Carol Reed, 104 min.) See details above.

W 10/27 Discussion question due

*Week 10:*

M 11/1 Chap. 9. *Smoke Signals* (1998, Chris Eyre, USA, 88 min.)

W 11/3 Discussion question due

*Week 11:*

M 11/8 No reading. *Once Were Warriors* (1994, Lee Tamahori, New Zealand, 102 min.)

W 11/10 Discussion question due

*Week 12:*

M 11/15 Read pp 355-68 & 426-36. *Raging Bull* (1980, Martin Scorsese, USA, 128 min.)

W 11/17 Discussion question due

*Week 13:*

M 11/22 **Papers due.** Read pp. 128-39 & 368-70; *Olympia II* (1938, Leni Riefenstahl, Germany, 96 min.)

W 11/24 Thanksgiving vacation

*Week 14:*

M 11/29 Read pp. 384-8 & 441-462. *His Girl Friday* (1940, Howard Hawks, USA, 92 min.)

W 12/1 Discussion question due

*Week 15:*

M 12/6 No reading. *Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!* (*¡Átame!*, 1990, Pedro Almodóvar, Spain, 105 min.)

W 12/8 Review for final

FINAL: Monday, 12/13, 1:10-3:10